



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



249458

MAY 21 2004

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF

R-19J

Kathleen Pucalik
President
Hammond Common Council
5925 Calumet Avenue
Hammond, Indiana 46320

Dear Ms. Pucalik:

Thank you for your letter of April 26, 2004, concerning the Calumet Container Superfund Site ("Site"). We appreciate the City of Hammond's cooperation in this matter and assure you that we will work alongside the City in our mutual effort to clean up the Site.

As indicated in your letter, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Emergency Response Program, the City of Hammond, and the State of Indiana have worked together to mitigate health hazards created from drummed wastes and soil contamination within the Site since Calumet Container Corporation closed in 1982. In regard to your concern over the liability documentation that was given to the Agency in the mid-1980's, we must maintain possession of any potentially liable party information to enforce a cleanup of the Site. We can make arrangements for the City to view or copy the records. Please contact Mr. Richard Murawski, Assistant Regional Counsel, to initiate this process.

With regard to U.S. EPA's recent efforts to involve various stakeholders in the Site, please be advised that we do not intend to make a final end-use determination for the Site. Our priority is to remove the threat presently posed by the Site and to ensure the protection of human health and the environment. Our efforts to assist interested parties in communicating ideas for future land use have been limited to facilitation and have been provided to assist the City and community organizations. With regard to your concern over assessment of groundwater at the Site, our emergency removal policy allows groundwater to be assessed only if there is a potential for drinking water wells to be affected. We have been unable to locate any drinking water wells near the Site and, therefore, cannot take an action for groundwater.

As you may already know, the Site was evaluated for placement on the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) from 1984-1991, and based on information available at the time, the Site did not score high enough in our ranking system to be proposed to the NPL. We are currently reassessing whether the Site will score high enough for placement on the NPL using recent data. We are working in partnership with IDEM on this reassessment. IDEM visited the Site this week

and performed some on- and off- Site screening of soils to determine whether there is evidence of migration of metals contamination in the neighboring residential community. IDEM is currently reviewing this data, and has indicated that there does not appear to be elevated metals levels in the surface soil off-Site. We will continue to work with IDEM during the reassessment process and will keep you updated as we get information.

U.S. EPA remains very concerned about the future management of this Site. We believe that the best way to plan a site cleanup and assist in its redevelopment is through cooperation between the various government parties that have jurisdiction over the site, the landowners, the potentially responsible parties, and the neighborhood communities who are most impacted by site conditions. We will continue to be available to discuss our efforts with you. I hope that we have addressed all the concerns raised in your letter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY
JERRI-ANNE GARL

Bharat Mathur
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr.
City of Hammond
Hammond City Hall
5925 Calumet Avenue
Hammond, Indiana 46320

Fran DuPey, Commissioner, Lake County
2293 North Main Street
Crown Point, Indiana 46307

Lori Kaplan, Commissioner
Indiana Department of Environmental Management
Post Office Box 6015
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6015

Melissa Farrell, President
Pulaski Park Neighborhood Association
4329 Grover Avenue
Hammond, Indiana 46327

bcc: Jason El-Zein, SE-5J
Jerri-Anne Garl, B-19J
Charles Gebien, SE-5J
Stuart Hill, P-19J
Sally Jansen, SE-5J
Rick Karl, S-6J
Mardi Klevs, B-19J
Maryann LaFaire, B-19J
William Messenger, SE-5J
Richard Murawski, C-14J
Bob Newport, B-19J
Verneta Simon, SE-5J
Jan Pels, SE-4J